throughout the emirate. Roads were built connecting the district capitals to Maiduguri, the major city of Bornu and to one another, and district capital markets came to be among the most active because of the increased population in the district capitals not producing their own goods.

In the economic sphere the colonial era sounded a death knell for the Saharan trade. A dribble of caravan trade still exists, but it was the express policy of the British to face Bornu around and turn its trade toward Nigeria and the Nigerian ports. Caravans were heavily taxed, and European trading companies were encouraged to move into Bornu and start circulating cash and cheap import goods. These few large English and French trading companies encouraged the appearance of a corps of Levantine traders who are ubiquitous in West Africa. They take credit from the large companies, giving it out again to large numbers of Africans who buy and sell for them. By the second world war ground-nuts were a well established cash crop, marketed through these companies although controlled by the government. When inflationary boom prices for ground-nuts hit Bornu after the war, the people were ready to take full advantage of it and there was a surge upwards of consumer buying, so that radios, bicycles, and many other industrial commodities became part of local life. On the other hand, judging by the surprise registered in the annual reports of the colonical officials, the government was a little stunned at first to know what to do with its increased revenues. However a host of new improvements began to be an accepted part of life in the public sector, just as new import items became common to the private sector. The most recent of such changes has already been mentioned in Chapter 1. After independence, the digging of deep wells increased the cattle population enormously and has provided a basis for further development in the area. This, then, is the Bornu background. It is a long and eventful one—and the people are proud of it. For an anthropologist, one of the most intriguing questions to ask is "why"—why has Bornu lasted so long in this area? Why has it adapted so well to modern times? It has absorbed Shehu Laminu's destruction of the Sefuwa dynasty, Rabeh's conquest, the colonial overlordship, and national independence in its calm stride. Its leaders and its people are remarkably stable—yet not enslaved by tradition. Indeed they strive to change and develop Bornu and their future is a bright and hopeful one. In the chapters to follow I hope to provide answers to these questions in order that we may ask them again after considering in more detail the quality of life in Bornu.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

and he is a *tada njima* or client of the settlement head. All residents of this new settlement look upon its founder as their local leader. Disputes between members are always taken to Aji before going to any higher authorities while disputes with outsiders follow the general Bornu rule of going first to a political leader superior in rank to both participants. The new settlement does not have a name; however in all likelihood if it continues to grow and Aji's place is taken by one of his heirs, either his brother or his son, it will be called Aji or Ajiri after its founder. At present Aji collects taxes from the men of the new community, and these are taken by the hamlet head of Gworongo to the head of Magumeri village area. Aji hopes that one day he will be able to take the taxes directly to Magumeri, thus helping to indicate his equal political status to that of the hamlet head of Gworongo. When that happens he will be a recognized bullama or head man of a hamlet or ward. He tries to take disputes directly to Magumeri village, but in 1957 this was not accepted and the hamlet head of Gworongo was invariably called to sit in on such discussions.

The same process can be seen operating in larger villages. In Magumeri village itself one ward under its bullama (ward or hamlet head) was, in 1957, becoming large enough so that people were beginning to speak of the possibility of its splitting into two under the old bullama and a new one. In the ward a man named Kachella has under his authority the compounds of several younger full brothers, three of his sons two of whom are married, several nephews, and a few unrelated clients who say they are his *tada njima*. He collects taxes from these compounds and takes the money directly to the village head of Magumeri. However he recognizes the authority of the present ward head in settling disputes and always consults the latter first before taking the matter to a higher authority. One of his sons has married a girl from the household of the ward head and this helps link the two households. The ward head seems tolerant of the rising power and influence of his neighbor and always consults him on any major decision affecting the ward. Eventually however, if the set of linked households under the authority of Kachella continues to expand, then he will become a recognized bullama of his own ward of the village and the office will be passed on to his heirs.

The Village Area

The village area in Bornu includes a major settlement which gives the area its name and a set of surrounding smaller hamlets that are included within the political boundaries of the village area. Thus Magumeri village area includes the village of Magumeri and a series of little hamlets in the surrounding countryside. As we have seen, smaller villages are divided into wards under bullama and the hamlets surrounding the village each have their own bullama as well. In other words all recognized political leaders under a village area head are called bullama. The head of a village area, that is, the political superior of all bullamas in the village area is called the *lawan*. However the system is flexible and a few large cities such as the capital city of Maiduguri, as well as several other centers with populations over 10,000, have several lawan, each in his own ward of the city. Under these city lawan are sub-wards again under the bullama. Thus the traditional nineteenth-cen-

[GEIDAM]

133 desert-like as one moves north from Geidam. The population to
[132] the north of Geidam continues to be Kanuri (or Manga), but its
[142] density declines rapidly as one moves directly north. Geidam lies on the Yobe River, usually referred to as the Komadugu Yobe River, a redundancy since komadugu means river in the Kanuri language. The Yobe is a slowly moving stream that empties into Lake Chad, approximately 100 miles east of Geidam. Many streams and rivers of the north flow for some months after the rains and then dry up completely. The Yobe, however, is large enough to continue to flow the year round. Before the rains it is reduced to a stream thirty or forty feet in width; after the rains the river reaches its flood crest, when it may extend over half a
[505] mile in width. Though one could travel from Geidam to Lake Chad on the Yobe River, the Kanuri do not use the river for travel or
[172] for commerce. Along the Yobe river, some twenty miles east of Geidam, lie the ruins of Birni Ngazargamo, the ancient capital of the Mais which was sacked by the Fulani. Hence Geidam is not
[36] far from the old center of empire. Along the river, and still further on, along the shores of Lake Chad, are numerous villages and towns.

131 The geographic location of Geidam, aside from the drier
[134] sandy nature of the land because of its northern location, is significant because of its situation in relation to Maiduguri,
131 the provincial capital, and to Nguru, the rail-head. Maiduguri,
• 633 in the center of the province (see Figure 2), is important both
491 because it is the administrative and commercial capital and be-

[GEIDAM]

• 633 cause it lies on the main highway connecting Ft. Lamy with Jos.
131 Nguru, in the northwestern corner of the province, is the second
491 [496] largest city in Bornu, and is particularly important because it marks the end of the rail line extending from Lagos via Jos. Geidam is strategically located so that it benefits from trade with both. (see Figure 1) Unpaved roads connect Geidam with Nguru, directly east, and with Maiduguri, to the southeast. It would be about 130 miles from Geidam to Maiduguri if one went by the shortest possible route. The road leads directly south from Geidam, however, and then directly east, and the total dis-
131 tance covered amounts to 170 miles. Though distances are great
49 and the condition of the roads is very poor, trade is dependent
438 on trucks which are the life-line of the country. Goods come into Geidam by truck from both Maiduguri and Nguru. They are then distributed throughout the countryside by merchants and tradesmen, using camels and donkeys to transport their goods.
[366] Since no roads at all lead north into Niger and the Kanuri villages north of Geidam, nor do roads lead east along the Yobe River to the villages and towns there, Geidam is an important regional center of trade and commerce. Its geographic location is therefore an important factor in determining the nature of the community.

B. The Physical Nature of the Community.

491 The road from Maiduguri joins that from Nguru a few miles
[366] west of the town (see Figure 3). The sole road connecting Gei-

178
642 most useful institution, in terms of survival, was the organization of a feudal state. Under the king, the nobility had their own fiefs which validated their status in the state and insured their all-important military cooperation. It was indicated in the chapter that this kind of organization has been used historically in Bornu for incorporating entire tribes into the Kanuri state, if such was desirable.

The major point, however, is the legacy of the state organization which the historical development of Kanuri feudalism has maintained. [701] A well ordered and easily expandable war machine for the offensive and defensive policies of the state was a primary result of the feudal organ- [692] isation. Once these structural principles were in operation, taxation [652] and a hierarchical political and judicial system became possible and operative over a wide territory.

178
633 The presence of a capital city with a large administrative
463 and military class served as a stimulus for the specialization of labour.
433 This body of people was an ever-ready market for the sale of surplus
439 subsistence produce and a wide range of specialized manufactured materials of local and imported origin, which in turn stimulated trade and the development of the market from the very earliest days of the kingdom.

178
642 Another of the contributory strengths of Kanuri feudalism in terms of survival was its flexibility, that is to say, its ability to expand and contract from the center. As long as the nucleus of a court and a monarch remained, no harm was done to its continued existence. Feudalism is a segmentary corporate structure; if the top remains, including the idea of its centrality and paramount position in the conception of the state, then the expansion and contraction of the state itself bears no relation whatsoever to its survival. Segments may break off, others may join on, but as long as there remains the tangible concept of some-

565 one of the other
369 common features of the tala or peasant class is the verticality of
571 their social relations. This is especially true of political affiliations. All rural and most or many urban tala can give an easily elicited answer to the question, "Whose tala are you?" The person questioned then tells the name of his Lawan (Village Area Head).(1) Thus tala not only connotes peasant or commoner, it also means someone's peasant, i.e.
[178] under the jurisdiction of some political office holder. The fact that there is in the city a small but growing number of people who do not feel this verticality or connectedness upward in a traditional manner is one of the most profound portents of social change in contemporary Bornu.

565 The tala, rural and urban, have many cultural characteris-
369 tics in common. They most often wear a short work shirt (dankiki) during the day, and their conversation is less etiquette ridden and more direct than that of the upper class. Linguistic usages among the tala vary from place to place, but generally involve the dropping of some of the consonantal phonemes. Thus in Magumeri musko (hand) was pronounced muko by the tala. These linguistic differences are considered to be less elegant and correct compared to the speech of the upper class. As in many class societies the speech of the lower classes is coloured by many words which the upper class considers to come within the scope of profanity. Thus a Kanuri tala always sprinkles his friendly conversation with many references to Allah or to "the wonder of Allah", or even occasional exclamatory references to excrement and the excretory funo-
[828] tions. To the upper classes evil deeds are committed by evil men (kam dibi); the same wrongdoer is more often referred to with an epithet like _____ shege! (a bastard) by the tala.

[633] (1) The city is divided into large wards with Lawans as their Head Men and Hamlet Heads (Bulama) as the heads of sub-wards.

621 If the extended household head can maintain the
571 subordination of his followers, then he is on the way to becoming a
554 "big" man which may eventually mean his attainment of the political
622 position of Hamlet or ward head (Bàlama), depending upon the location of his settlement. This achieved status is then stabilized through the inheritance rules.

The Village Area

632 The small village area includes a town cluster of adjoining compounds (usually 500-2000 population) and a surrounding group of small settlements (Hamlets) in the immediate area. The larger towns are broken down into wards, and as we have seen the ward head and the hamlet head have the same political status, that of Bàlama. This is due to their similar political roles as local leaders under the Lawan
633 (Village Area Head). In larger cities such as Maiduguri, Geidam, or Nguru, the "wards" of the city include such large populations that their head men receive the title of Lawan. These Lawans in turn have Bàlama under them as heads of sub-ward divisions in their jurisdictional area.

632 In the town of Nagumeri, the Lawan has jurisdiction over all
[565] persons in the Village Area who describe themselves as his peasants. This excludes all persons who are directly subordinate to the District
[651] Head, the Judge, or the N.A. in Maiduguri. Formally he collects a Haraji (assessment) tax from everybody except the District Head, but in reality, he has little political control over anyone who has functioning attachments to the Bornu N.A.

632 The Lawan acts as his own ward head, of the nguro Lawantari
621 (the Lawan's ward), and many of the compounds in this ward house the followers of Lawan, i.e. the members of his extended household organization. Some of the householders had compounds in this ward long before